AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (Currently Amended) A data terminal equipment for use in an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to said data terminal equipment which is placed on an information user's side for retrieving the content data through a communications network, said data terminal equipment comprising:

an index retrieval part operable to retrieve index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

an authentication part operable to authenticate the content data by using the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part; and

a content retrieval part operable to transmit a retrieval request for retrieving the authenticated content data to the server only if said authentication part has confirmed authenticity of the content data, and to receive the authenticated content data from the server~~.~~, wherein:

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof;

the index data includes embedded data in which the locator is embedded as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency; and

said authentication part is operable to extract the locator from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part, and to confirm the authenticity of the content data if the locator is successfully extracted.

2.   (Currently Amended) ~~The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, wherein~~A data terminal equipment for use in an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment which is placed on an information user's side for retrieving the content data through a communications network, said data terminal equipment comprising:

an index retrieval part operable to retrieve index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

an authentication part operable to authenticate the content data by using the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part; and

a content retrieval part operable to transmit a retrieval request for retrieving the authenticated content data to the server only if said authentication part has confirmed authenticity of the content data, and to receive the authenticated content data from the server, wherein:

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof.;

the index data includes embedded data which is embedded with the locator as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency, and a location to which the content data is linked.; and

said authentication part is comprises:an extraction part operable to extract, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part, and to confirm the authenticity of the content data if the watermark locator is successfully extracted and the extracted locator matches with the location included in the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part.

a text locator extraction part operable to extract, as a text locator, a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data from the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part if said extraction part has successfully extracted the watermark locator,

a check part operable to determine whether the text locator extracted by said text locator extraction part matches with the watermark locator extracted by said extraction part, and

an authenticity confirmation part operable to confirm the authenticity of the content data only if said check part determines that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

3.   (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, further comprising:

a display part operable to display a predetermined warning if said authentication part has not confirmed the authenticity of the content data. wherein

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,

the index data includes embedded data embedded with the locator as an electronic watermark, and

said authentication part comprises:

an extraction part operable to extract, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved by said index retrieval part, and

an authenticity confirmation part operable to confirm the authenticity of the content data if said extraction part has successfully extracted the watermark locator.

4. (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to ~~claim 1~~claim 2, further comprising:

a display part operable to display a predetermined warning if said authentication part has not confirmed the authenticity of the content data.

5. (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to ~~claim 2~~ claim 1, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

6. (Currently Amended) In an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side through a communications network, a method of retrieving the content data by the data terminal equipment, said method comprising:

retrieving index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

authenticating the content data by using the index data retrieved in said retrieving;

and

transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the content data to the server only if authenticity of the content data has been confirmed in said authenticating, and receiving the authenticated content from the server~~,~~ wherein:

- 4 -

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof;

the index data includes embedded data in which the locator is embedded as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency; and

said authenticating further comprises

extracting the watermark locator from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said retrieving, and

confirming the authenticity of the content data if the watermark locator is successfully extracted in said extracting.

7.   (Currently Amended) ~~The data retrieval method according to claim 6, wherein,~~In an information providing system where a server provides content data stored therein to a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side through a communications network, a method of retrieving the content data by the data terminal equipment, said method comprising:

retrieving index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

authenticating the content data by using the index data retrieved in said retrieving; and

transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the content data to the server only if authenticity of the content data has been confirmed in said authenticating, and receiving the authenticated content data from the server, wherein:

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof;~~,~~

the index data includes embedded data which is embedded with the locator as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency, and a location to which the content data is linked;~~,~~ and

said authenticating further comprises~~:~~

extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said retrieving,

- 5 -

extracting, as a text locator, ~~a locator specified as being indicative of the~~ ~~content data linking to the embedded data~~the location from the index data retrieved in said retrieving if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said watermark locator extracting,

determining whether the text locator extracted in said text locator extracting matches with the watermark locator extracted in said watermark locator extracting, and

~~authenticating~~ confirming the authenticity of the content data only if it is determined in said determining that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

8.   (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to claim 6, further comprising displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating.~~wherein,~~

~~the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a~~ ~~storage location thereof,~~

~~the index data includes embedded data embedded with the locator as an electronic~~ ~~watermark, and~~

~~said authenticating further comprises:~~

~~extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic~~ ~~watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said~~ ~~index retrieving, and~~

~~confirming the authenticity of the content data if the watermark locator~~ ~~has been successfully extracted in said extracting.~~

9.   (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to ~~claim 6~~ claim 7, further comprising displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating.

10.   (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to ~~claim 7~~claim 6, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

11.   (Currently Amended) A recording medium having a program stored ~~therein~~thereon, said program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network, ~~the~~ said program containing instructions readable by the data terminal equipment ~~readable instructions being~~ and operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to perform ~~the~~ a method comprising:

retrieving index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

authenticating the content data by using the index data retrieved in said retrieving; and

transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the content data to the server only if authenticity of the content data has been confirmed in said authenticating, and receiving the authenticated content data from the server~~.~~, wherein:

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof;

the index data includes embedded data in which the locator is embedded as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency; and

said authenticating further comprises

extracting the locator from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said retrieving, and

confirming the authenticity of the content data if the watermark locater is successfully extracted in said extracting.

12.   (Currently Amended) ~~The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein~~ A recording medium having a program stored thereon, said program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network, said program containing instructions readable by the data

terminal equipment and operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to perform a method comprising:

retrieving index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

authenticating the content data by using the index data retrieved in said retrieving; and

transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the content data to the server only if authenticity of the content data has been confirmed in said authenticating, and receiving the authenticated content data from the server, wherein:

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof;

the index data includes embedded data which is embedded with the locator as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency, and a location to which the content data is linked; and

said authenticating further comprises:

extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said retrieving,

extracting, as a text locator, ~~a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data~~ the location from the index data retrieved in said retrieving if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said watermark locator extracting,

determining whether the text locator extracted in said text locator extracting matches with the watermark locator extracted in said watermark locator extracting, and

authenticating the content data only if it is determined in said determining that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

13. (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein the data terminal equipment readable instructions are further operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to:

display a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating.

~~the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,~~

~~the index data includes embedded data that is embedded with the locator as an electronic watermark, and~~

~~said authenticating further comprises:~~

~~extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said retrieving, and~~

~~confirming the authenticity of the content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting.~~

14.   (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to ~~claim 11~~claim 12, wherein ~~the data terminal equipment readable instructions are~~said program is further operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to:

display a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating.

15.   (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to ~~claim 12~~ claim 11, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

16.   (Currently Amended) A program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network, said program being stored on a computer readable medium, and said program containing instructions readable by the data terminal equipment ~~readable instructions being~~and operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to perform a method comprising:

retrieving index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

authenticating the content data by using the index data retrieved in said retrieving; and

transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the content data to the server only if authenticity of the content data has been confirmed in said authenticating, and receiving the authenticated content data from the server~~.~~, wherein:

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof;

the index data includes embedded data in which the locator is embedded as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency; and

said authenticating further comprises

extracting the locator from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved in said retrieving, and

confirming the authenticity of the content data if the watermark locater is successfully extracted in said extracting.

17.   (Currently Amended) ~~The program according to claim 16, wherein~~ A program for retrieving content data by a data terminal equipment placed on an information user side in an information providing system in which a server provides the content data stored therein through a communications network, said program being stored on a computer readable medium, and said program containing instructions readable by the data terminal equipment and operable to instruct the data terminal equipment to perform a method comprising:

retrieving index data indicating the content data prior to retrieving the content data;

authenticating the content data by using the index data retrieved in said retrieving; and

transmitting a retrieval request for retrieving the content data to the server only if authenticity of the content data has been confirmed in said authenticating, and receiving the authenticated content data from the server, wherein:

the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof;~~;~~

the index data includes embedded data embedded with the locator as an electronic watermark by an authorization agency, and ~~linked~~ a location to which the content data is linked~~;~~ and

said authenticating further comprises~~:~~

extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved said retrieving,

extracting, as a text locator, ~~a locator specified as being indicative of the content data linking to the embedded data~~ the location from the index data retrieved in said retrieving if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said watermark locator extracting,

determining whether the text locator extracted in said text locator extracting matches with the watermark locator extracted in said watermark locator extracting, and

~~authenticating~~ confirming the authenticity of the content data only if it is determined in said determining that the text locator matches with the watermark locator.

18. (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 16, wherein said method further comprises displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating.

~~the content data is assigned a locator indicating information for specifying a storage location thereof,~~

~~the index data includes embedded data embedded with the locator as an electronic watermark, and~~

~~said authenticating further comprises:~~

~~extracting, as a watermark locator, the locator embedded as the electronic watermark from the embedded data included in the index data retrieved said retrieving, and~~

~~confirming the authenticity of the content data if the watermark locator has been successfully extracted in said extracting.~~

- 11 -

19.   (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 16 claim 17, further wherein said method further comprises comprising displaying a predetermined warning if the authenticity of the content data has not been confirmed in said authenticating.

20.   (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 17 claim 16, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

21.   (Currently Amended) The data terminal equipment according to claim 3 claim 2, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

22.   (Currently Amended) The data retrieval method according to claim 8 claim 7, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

23.   (Currently Amended) The recording medium according to claim 13 claim 12, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

24.   (Currently Amended) The program according to claim 18 claim 17, wherein the embedded data is moving-picture data and/or audio data.

25.   (Previously Presented) The data terminal equipment according to claim 1, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

26.   (Previously Presented) The data retrieval method according to claim 6, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

27.   (Previously Presented) The recording medium according to claim 11, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

28.   (Previously Presented) The program according to claim 16, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

29.   (New) The data terminal equipment according to claim 2, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

30.   (New) The data retrieval method according to claim 7, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

31.   (New) The recording medium according to claim 12, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.

32.   (New) The program according to claim 17, wherein the index data is provided by an electronic mail.